

# Flood fallowed, harvested fields for wildlife

Head and shoulders  
Photo of DC or  
Soil Conservationist  
here

By \_\_\_\_\_,  
District Conservationist, Natural  
Resources Conservation Service,  
\_\_\_\_\_ County.

There's nothing like a little bit of water and food to attract wildlife. If you have the capability to flood fallow or harvested crop fields, you will be rewarded with wildlife many times over.

You'll help wintering waterfowl and water-loving birds by flooding fallow fields to a depth of four to 12 inches. Wintering waterfowl will use it if you flood fields after harvest in October and leave the water on until early March.

If the land is fallowed, you can offer brood habitat to waterfowl by flooding four to twelve inches deep from March to mid-August.

The one time you might not want to flood fallowed fields for wildlife purposes is when the fields already has dense nesting cover-- the water will destroy too many nests.

You'll get more diversity of waterfowl and wildlife if you can vary the depth of water. Shorebirds forage on wet mud and in water only a few inches deep. Dabbling ducks and waders will want water up to a foot deep.

On fallow fields, if you can, use water drained from a newly-planted rice field or other crop.

Take advantage of winter rains by adding a board to your water control structure, to allow flooding of the lower parts of

your fields. It's easy, and should attract migratory birds to the farm.

## Flooding benefits.

The reasons flooded fields are helpful to wildlife, and other benefits of flooding are:

- 1) Excellent migratory shorebird and waterfowl habitat
- 2) In second and third year fallow fields flooded in the fall, abundant seed and invertebrate food sources for wintering waterfowl.
- 3) With spring and summer water-- fields flooded between February and August-- there will be excellent brood habitat and green feed and insects for birds like pheasants.
- 4) Flooding for at least two consecutive months during the spring and summer will help control Johnsongrass and other noxious weeds.

For more information, stop at our office at \_\_\_\_\_ (Number) \_\_\_\_\_ (Street) in \_\_\_\_\_ (city), or visit the NRCS Wildlife Habitat Management Institute's website at [www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov) or the NRCS home web site at [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)



*Flooding a field after harvest in the fall will likely attract migratory waterfowl.*

## Wildlife Ways Did you know....



The Great Blue Heron is one of the most adaptable and widespread wading birds in North America. It nests in colonies in trees, and hunts in shallow water. It wades or stands until it can catch its prey-- whether fish, reptile, amphibian or mammal--which it usually swallows whole.